IN THIS ISSUE:

- Highlights from the 44th General Conference
- Update on CMC Missions
- New Church Plant in Dallas
- Small Act of Service Leads to HUGE Impact
- CMC Church Gets Nationwide Exposure

A Publication of the Congregational Methodist Church
Smoky Mountain Convention Center
October 27-30, 2014

Monday, October 27
7:00 p.m.  The Specks and Benny Tate

Tuesday, October 28
9:00 a.m.  The Specks and Benny Tate
10:30 a.m.  Break
11:00 a.m.  David Pendleton
        Noon  Free time begins
        7:00 p.m.  Mark Trammell Quartet

Wednesday, October 29
9:00 a.m.  The Specks and Benny Tate
11:00 a.m.  Free time begins
        TBA  Smith Family Dinner Theater

Thursday, October 30
9:00 a.m.  The Specks and Benny Tate
11:00 a.m.  Adjourn for home

Doors open 1 hour before each session

Conference Only: $125 per person
Conference with Lodging
for 3 nights at the Early Bird rate:
$199 ea. at 4 per room  Add $20 ea. after: 7/30/14
$219 ea. at 3 per room  Bal. & names
$249 ea. at 2 per room  due: 9/10/14
$359 ea. at 1 per room

All prices include the $25 non-refundable deposit per person and admission to the Smith Family Dinner Theater.
See: www.celebrators.org
THE PEOPLE OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH HAVE ADOPTED 2014 AS “THE YEAR OF PRAYER.”

DR. BENNY TATE: President of the CMC
DR. BILL SNOW: Vice President of the CMC
KEITH MERRITT: Director of Church Ministries
DAVY FENTON: Director of Missions

Church Ministries Board:
Keith Merritt (Director)
Ben Gerald (Chairman)
Chris Covington (Vice-Chairman)
Jamie Altman (Secretary)
Ken Griffis
Bobby Bentley
Ronnie Morgan
Nathan Sanders
Beau Lawrence
Chris Lohrstorfer

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“THE PRAYER OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN AVAILETH MUCH!”

- James 5:16

ABOUT THE COVER:
This past 4th of July weekend, Rock Springs Church hosted its annual Independence Day Celebration Picnic with Mac Powell of Third Day, Si Robertson of Duck Dynasty and Diamond Rio. It was a record setting day for Rock Springs Church with all proceeds going to support a good cause.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 33

CMC Headquarters: P.O. Box 9 . Florence, MS 39073 . 601.845.8787 . www.cm-church.org
Since our Nation's very first days, God's greatest movements in our midst have been fashioned and sustained by prayer...

- from the signing of our earliest documents, to our triumphs over days of darkness, to the spiritual awakenings that have sustained our faith and resolve over the centuries. I truly believe our greatest weapon is not protesting but praying because when we work, we work, but when we pray, God works. Allow me to share four areas in America that we need to take to God in prayer:
First of all, we must pray for our **PROTECTION**. Yes, it is government’s job to provide the common defense but ultimately only God can protect us. Benjamin Franklin stated, “In the beginning of the contest with Great Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had prayer in this room for Divine Protection. Our prayers, sir, were heard and they were graciously answered.” In light of the attacks on our freedom we must fervently pray for the Divine Protection of our land.

Secondly, we must pray for our **PURITY**. Yes, God will bless us when we have honest industry, truthful education and an honorable way of life. We must ask God to search us and know our hearts today, and cleanse us from every sin and set us free.

Thirdly, we must pray for our **POLITICAL LEADERS**. Yes, the Bible commands us to pray for kings and all who are in authority (1 Timothy 2:11). We are to pray that they live Godly lives and serve with dignity. Political leaders are referred to as ministers in the Bible (Romans 13), and we should pray that they will seek wisdom from God and make righteous decisions because righteousness will exalt our Nation. We must pray they are guided by principles and not by polls, pundits, parties or political interest groups. We must ask God to give them the courage to stand for what is right even if it means standing alone. William Penn said it best when he said, “Right is right, no matter who is against it, and wrong is wrong, no matter who is for it.”

Fourthly, we must pray for our **PARISHES**. Yes, the church is waiting on America to get right with God, but America is waiting on the church to get right. In II Chronicles 7:14 it states, “If My people, which are called by My Name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” I truly believe as the church goes, so goes the Nation. The church needs to be “salt and light” in our Nation and be engaging as well as involved. Edmond Burk said, “All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.” Too many churches are simply doing very little and sometimes nothing. We need awakenings to begin in our church houses and it will spread to school houses, court houses, state houses and to the White House. But it all begins with your house and my house because every great move of God can be traced back to a kneeling figure. Let’s Pray!

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**America – An Exceptional Nation**

**Dr. Benny Tate**

I truly believe that the hand of God has blessed the nation of America, like no other nation. Within the first two hundred years of our nation’s founding, men walked on the moon, created an educational system that was the envy of the world and established Capitalism where opportunity exists for everyone. The reason is simple – God’s hand has been on this great nation since its inception.

The founding father of our country was definitely a believer in the God of the Bible, a man not only of tremendous intellect, but also of conscience, caring, dedication and faith. And his faith was founded on experience. One particularly interesting account occurred on July 9, 1755, during the French and Indian War. George Washington was with the British troops under General Edward Braddock on their way to Fort Duquesne when they were ambushed by the French. The Brits were being slaughtered since they were only
accustomed to fighting in open fields. To deliver orders from General Braddock to the troops, Washington rode horseback back and forth across the battle. Every other officer on horseback, except Washington, was shot down. Even General Braddock was killed, at which point the troops fled in confusion. After the battle, on July 18, 1755, Washington wrote to his brother, John A. Washington: “But by the all-powerful dispensations of Providence, I have been protected beyond all human probability or expectation; for I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me, yet escaped unhurt, although death was leveling my companions on every side of me!” A famous Indian warrior who was in that battle said, “Washington was never born to be killed by a bullet! I had seventeen fair fires at him with my rifle, and after all could not bring him to the ground!” Truly, God providentially watched over our founding father and He continues to watch over our nation.

I certainly do not agree with all that goes on in our nation, especially the moral decline, but I am grateful that I live under the banner of freedom. I believe we should celebrate, preserve and thank God for our liberties. President John Adams once wrote to his wife, Abigail: “The second day of July, 1776, will be memorable epochal in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations, as the great Anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp, shews, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations, from one end of the continent to the other, from this time forward forever.”

I recently took my daughter, Savannah, to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to visit Independence Hall. I shared with her that for the five weeks our Founding Fathers struggled to agree on a Constitution for the young Nation. They were battling over states’ rights and none were willing to compromise. Then Ben Franklin spoke up and said, “Gentlemen, we need the Father of Lights to illuminate our understanding.” The men knelt and called on the God of Heaven and soon after, the Constitution was adopted. Yes, it was the prayer that saved the Nation.

The Congregational Methodist Church has established 2014 as the Year of Prayer and I truly believe our Nation needs prayer now more than ever before. The Bible tells us in II Chronicles 7:14,

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

God gives us four steps to Revival in America in this one verse. First, we must conquer our pride. Second, we must continue in prayer. Third, we must commit to purity. Fourth, we must claim the promises. God truly has blessed America and now is the time for America to bless God.

4 Steps to Revival in America

1. We Must Conquer our Pride.
2. We Must Continue in Prayer.
3. We Must Commit to Purity.
4. We Must Claim the Promises.
What does the word “holiness” mean? It generally brings to mind issues of ethics and morality. It may signify a feeling or sense of awe and worship. It often brings to mind a legalistic and old-fashioned lifestyle.

While the Ancient Near East used the term to signify “anything that belongs to a god,” the Bible does something unique in its time: God Himself is said to be Holy. Everything we understand biblically about the term points to the God who is Holy. But, what does it mean that God is Holy? It obviously isn’t a simple legal designation, because God is the source of the designation. He doesn’t become Holy, so you can’t just make it mean how God acts – it has to be about who He is, in His nature. Surely though, God’s actions are based on His nature.

How did He act when He couldn’t act toward His creation? The only action that occurred previous to creation was the Trinitarian life and love - shared in mutuality between the three personal relationships that is God.

Therein lies the answer – the very nature of God as seen in the Trinity is the very definition of Holiness. God is Holy in nature in that His nature is to give Himself away. Everything ethically is based on this model. Outward living is good. Inward living is sin. Self-centeredness is the fundamental picture of carnality. So, God is Holy, God is Trinity. Why? Because it is His nature to give Himself away. When we reflect that, we are reflecting the very nature of God. John Wesley put love as the central concept of holiness. Jesus said that love is the keeping of the law. Love (shared life) is the point.

The concept of holiness as God’s “overflowing shared life” is drawn in a large way from the work of a fourth century theologian named Gregory Nazianzus – including the doctrine he is most famous for – the concept of parichoresis (This is where we get the word “Choreography”). Gregory saw the Divine Life as dynamic, moving, coming from the Father to the Son, and the life that is extended is the person called Spirit. That is the dance that is God – an ecstatic life of love given freely to others. That is the life that creates, the life that brings us into existence, for that very existence. That life is the source of the Divine Image as reflected in the heart and soul of humans, created to reflect the relationship the Father has with the Son.

The 21st century will give the Church plenty to define and re-define – Holiness is an issue where we absolutely have to be clear. What do we believe about God? If we continue to define holiness as “separated to God” we may miss the opportunity before us. God is more than something you separate yourself to.

The Biblical picture of a living life-sharing God gives us the foundation to point to. What God wants from us is not strangeness as much as a self-giving love. He made us in His image. We are made to give ourselves away. That is exactly what the world is looking for.

Let’s reflect Him – not by trying to be different - as much as loving differently.

DR. CHRIS LOHRSTORFER is an ordained elder in the CMC and serves as the Senior Pastor of Hinds Independent Methodist Church and on the Board of the Division of Church Ministries for the CMC. Chris and his wife, Mary have two children.
In this edition of the Messenger you are going to read inspiring stories of churches across our denomination that demonstrate church health.

Keystone CMC will soon be dedicating their new facilities at a new location. I am excited about the ministry that is going on among the congregation of Keystone and the leadership of co-pastors Ken Griffis and Kenny Martin. The intentionality of their building was preceded by their intentionality in discerning who and how they were going to be used by God in His mission. Preparation for their move to a new facility has been bathed in dependent prayer and development of the leadership team. There is a wonderful witness of God’s presence among their congregation and we join them in the excitement and anticipation of what God is doing and the harvest in the weeks, months and years ahead. Keystone is on the journey of maximized health for their church.

Some eighteen months ago the Eastridge Park CMC lost their sanctuary to fire. You will read the story of the refining that fire brought for the church in defining their mission and evaluating values of community, ministry and worship. Prayer is a common component to churches experiencing health…Pastor Mark Mills shares with us about the commitment to prayer that followed their loss and then goes on to share the blessings of twenty three new members and an intimacy among the people with God and one another. EPC is on the journey of maximized health for their church.

Lifepoint Church of Cartersville Georgia has blazed new trails and continues to refine their mission in strategic efforts. Pastor Nathan Sanders and a fantastic ministry team have developed the big picture and are intentionally leading lives to be transformed in the power of Christ. You might ask, “how have they experienced this revitalization of their mission?” I will tell you it has been by continued self-assessment followed by intentional strategies, and by saying no to “everything,” and yes to those things God is leading them to do.

Olive Grove is a relatively new CM Church. Recently it was our privilege to be at the dedication of the new facilities they have recently purchased. A wonderful congregation led by Pastor John...
Congregational Methodist Church

Curtain and a super leadership team. They get purpose and mission and intentionality. They get that we must choose to resist change or embrace change. Leaving the security of another denomination, leaving behind a church plant, letting go of perceived security…and…God has opened doors and sharpened the vision and given a new passion for their purpose and future. They are experience the maximizing of good health.

Bethlehem Community Church

Bethlehem Community Church continues to push forward with a mission to evangelize their community. While the article tells of the event it is the behind the scenes with men, women, prayer and care ministries, that you will understand their experience of transformational health. A people who are embracing vision to work in the field for they are white unto harvest. The commitment to ministry outside their walls, the value of developing disciples through small groups, the continued sense of urgency in touching lives and helping people experience transforming power of Jesus Christ in their lives. They are maximizing their health.

Rock Springs Church

Rock Springs Church has been and is the inspiration for many of our pastors and churches. They continue to press forward in innovative ministries to maximize their influence for the kingdom and to experience health. Rock Springs now hosts weekly services at three locations and streaming live into thousand of homes weekly. As an example of a “transformational church,” Rock Springs exemplifies values of vibrant leadership, prayerful dependence and relational intentionality. They are in a constant status of evaluation and discerning the context to fulfill the mission. Rock Springs’ emphasis is on leading people to be disciples of Jesus Christ and to engage in meeting needs of people around the world.

We are all on the same stage. What will we do? Will we examine ourselves, our churches, the way we are doing ministry. Ed Setzer said, “Churches of all sizes, even small ones, should engage in some form of assessment because it is necessary, legitimate and beneficial.”

Finally, it isn’t necessarily about numbers. We need to evaluate and then proactively and strategically chart our course so that we can be healthy. “The size of a church does not determine its health. But a church’s health can determine its size. An honest assessment doesn’t tell you if your church is too small, but it can reveal whether your small church is healthy.” (Setzer)

Winston Churchill said, “However beautiful the strategy, occasionally we should look at the results.” Join us in making a church health journey. Assessment can prepare your church for what God wants to do next. “ Will you?

For His Glory,

Keith Merritt
Director of Church Ministries

KEITH MERRITT is the Senior Pastor of Weaver Congregational Methodist Church and also serves as the Church Ministries Director for the CMC.

The DCM recently co-sponsored The Vibrant Leadership Conference with Dr. Stan Toler hosted by Pastor Chris Covington and the Victory Congregational Methodist Church. Our special thanks to Victory CMC and Bethlehem Community Church for providing the worship for this event.
Dear Friends,

Greetings in the matchless name of the Lord Jesus Christ!

We recently celebrated our 44th General Conference and I truly believe it was a time of inspiration and motivation experienced by all. During this year’s conference, we all celebrated many of the past accomplishments of our churches and people. I love what Winston Churchill once said, “The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you can see.”

I had the opportunity to attend the WMU Conference on Monday night at the Fowler Institute. I rejoice in the impact our Women’s Missionary Societies are having and the souls that are being reached for the Kingdom. We honored Rev. Barbara Campbell for her 10 years as WMU President. During her tenure, our societies have grown exponentially and our missionaries have greatly benefited from the support, prayers and resources.

We also presented several with the Lifetime Achievement Award during the Wednesday evening service. Among them were Rev. Doug and Delores Feazell, Rev. Don Henley, Rev. Jimmy Holder, Rev. Edsel Goins and Rev. Ned Chipley. I truly believe if we experience success in life it is because we stood on the shoulders of others and these people have been a support and inspiration to all of us in our beloved church. I thank them for their lives of sacrifice and service and we desire to follow the examples they have personified and exemplified.

We were also challenged for the future. Our speakers were second to none. Dr. James Merritt, Rev. Ben Gerald, Rev. Jay Frazier and Rev. Richard Headrick were simple yet profound as they each gave us a challenge with handles to accomplish it.

A couple of extra features this year during the conference were a workshop on communication and a movie viewing of “The Last Ounce of Courage.” This is a great movie made by Rev. Richard Headrick that every American should view. It celebrates God and America.

“\textit{The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you can see.}”

Missions Director Davy Fenton and Church Ministries Director Keith Merritt presented positive reports that encouraged us with progress and gave us a challenge for the coming years. I rejoice in the local churches that are experiencing help through the programs offered by our Church Ministries Department and it thrills my soul to see our Missions Department reaching into countries in which we have never been before. We are truly making an impact in God’s world. The Fowler Institute will continue to expand as an educational tool for our pastors and laity and was celebrated by our people during the conference.

I would like to close by thanking you for your vote of confidence in electing me to another term as your President. I take myself lightly but I take my responsibility seriously. I will serve with humility and honor to the best of my ability. I also appreciate the service rendered by Rev. Phil Smith as Vice President. He
completed his term and served with integrity, excellence and cooperation. I am thankful for Rev. Bill Snow’s willingness to assume the Vice Presidency. Rev. Snow is a man of accomplishment, integrity and vision. I am honored to have him working in this capacity. We also re-elected Mrs. Janet Woods and Mrs. Hannah Windham to serve as our General Conference Secretary and Assistant Secretary. These ladies have done a superb job and are an asset to our church. We are blessed to have them both!

I believe things are hopeful and optimistic in our church today. Our people seem to have a spirit to learn, grow and make a difference for God and for good. But I also believe our finest days are not behind us but before us. I recently read the following story:

There was a young woman who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness and had been given three months to live. So as she was getting her things ‘in order,’ she contacted her pastor to discuss certain aspects of her final wishes. She told him what songs she wanted sung at the service, what scriptures she would like read, and what outfit she wanted to be buried in.

Everything was in order and the pastor was preparing to leave when the young woman suddenly remembered something very important to her. “There’s one more thing,” she said excitedly. “What’s that?” came the pastor’s reply. “This is very important,” the young woman continued. “I want to be buried with a fork in my right hand.” The pastor stood looking at the young woman, not knowing quite what to say. “That surprises you, doesn’t it?” the young woman asked. “Well, to be honest, I’m puzzled by the request,” said the pastor.

The young woman explained. “My grandmother once told me this story, and from that time on I have always tried to pass along its message to those I love and those who are in need of encouragement. In all my years of attending church socials and potluck dinners, I always remember that when the dishes of the main course were being cleared, someone would inevitably lean over and say, ‘Keep your fork.’ It was my favorite part because I knew that something better was coming...like velvety chocolate cake or deep-dish apple pie. Something wonderful, and with substance! So, I just want people to see me there in that casket with a fork in my hand and I want them to wonder, ‘What’s with the fork?’ Then I want you to tell them: Her best days are ahead!”

Congregational Methodists, I believe our best days are ahead too!

Excited about the future,

Dr. Benny Tate
CMC President
44th General Conference
of the Congregational Methodist Church

Dr. James Merritt
Mr. Richard Headrick
Dr. Benny Tate
Director Keith Merritt
Director Davy Fenton
Mississippi Lt. Governor Tate Reeves
Dr. Benny Tate

Director Keith Merritt
Director Davy Fenton
44th General Conference
of the Congregational Methodist Church
44th General Conference
of the Congregational Methodist Church

Pastor Jay Frazier
Pastor Ken Griffis
Pastor Bobby Bentley
Pastor Michael Elliott
Dr. Bill Fowler
Pastor Ben Gerald
44th General Conference
of the Congregational Methodist Church

Janet Woods
Shelton Feazell
Reverend Holder is married to Betty Graves Holder. Jimmy and Betty are parents to seven children and numerous grandchildren. They are a wonderful team in ministry.

Reverend Jimmy Holder, son of the late Rev. J.E. Holder, was born in the Congregational Methodist Church. He was saved at age fourteen and accepted the call to preach at seventeen, ordained August 30, 1957. Brother Holder has served in four pastorates: Bloomfield, Mill Creek (21 years), Skyview and Florence (celebrating 31 years as of June 30, 2014). He has served in the capacity of Mississippi Annual Conference Chairman for ten years, a member of the Board of Directors of the Division of Education (since 1963), preached revivals and camp meetings across the CMC and President of the Mississippi Family Camp since 2007, leading them in building a new tabernacle. Reverend Holder has often expressed that it is an honor to be part of the CMC.
CMC LIFETIME AWARD- Reverend Ned Chipley

Reverend Benjamin Ned Chipley was saved at age 15 at Pleasant Grove CMC, Carthage, MS. and one week later, answered the call to preach. He attended Dallas Bible School and Westminster and earned a Bachelor of Science degree from East Texas State College. Ned and Martha Ann (Veal) will celebrate their 60th Wedding Anniversary this August. They have two sons and a daughter and ten grandchildren. Rev. Chipley has served in six pastorates including Commerce CMC (2 yrs.), Farmer's Academy CMC (4 yrs.), Briggs's Street CMC (8 yrs.), Wesleyan Bible Church (Founder/20 yrs), Eastridge Park CMC (6 yrs.) and New Hope CMC. Ned served the CMC as Director of Home Missions for eight years and has made valuable contributions to the CMC.

Bro. Ned became involved in Evangelism early in his ministry with programs such as Evangelism Explosion and using the Four Spiritual Laws booklet to witness to people, one on one. Ned has been instrumental in leading hundreds to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ with a number of these going into the ministry. Rev. Chipley was instrumental in founding two chapters of the Christian Motorcyclists Association, one in Mesquite and one in Nacogdoches, TX.
Rev. and Mrs. Don (Patricia) Henley have been married for 56 years. They have two children: Donna Henley Martin and Doug Henley. They are blessed with five grandchildren.

Don retired from the SBC after twenty-five years of service. He then joined the Congregational Methodist Church serving over 23 years. Bro. Henley served Piedmont First Church for ten years, Fairview CMC for one year and Liberty Hill for eleven years. In each tenure he led the respective church in growth. At Piedmont, Rev. Henley led the church in many renovations to existing facilities and a new fellowship hall. Under his leadership, the Liberty Hill CMC built a fellowship hall followed by a spacious and beautiful sanctuary with class rooms, offices and bathrooms. Reverend Henley has served the Alabama Annual Conference as Chairman for several years and remains active on the Ministerial Committee of the AC.
CMC LIFETIME AWARD - Reverend Doug Feazell

F. Douglas Feazell and Delores Ann Feazell have been blessed with 57 years in marriage. They are parents of two sons, Shelton (Alice) and Gary and one daughter, Rhonda (Vern) and grandparents of three grandchildren (Paris, Zach and Tyson).

Reverend Feazell received a Bachelor of Religion from Westminster College in 1959, a Bachelor of Education from Jacksonville State University in 1969, a Masters of Education from Mississippi College in 1975 and post graduate work at Jackson State University.

He has taught on both the high school level and collegiate level at Wesley College and Jackson State University. His ministry includes pastoring eleven churches in Texas, Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi. Reverend Feazell has served the Congregational Methodist Church in many capacities on the District, Annual and General Conference level, which include President of Westminster College for six years, Director of the Department of Education, Director of Church Ministries and Editor of the Messenger for ten years.
CMC LIFETIME AWARD- Delores Feazell

Delores B. Feazell has been a life-long Congregational Methodist. Her educational achievements include a Bachelor of Religion Degree from Westminster College, a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Jacksonville State University, a Master of Christian Education from Reformed Theological Seminary and a Master of Marriage and family Therapy from RTS. During the 57 years of marriage to Doug she served in the role of a pastor’s wife for 23 years. She taught full time at Wesley College for six years; was dean of admissions, and also supervised the dining hall for several years. She later taught in a part-time capacity as an instructor for seven years.

Delores served the CMC for 28 years in Church Ministries. These years included many ventures, long hours, countless miles of travel and a dedicated service to the Kingdom through the Congregational Methodist Church. She served as editor of the Messenger (15 years). Mrs. Feazell has written many Sunday school lessons, oversaw the curriculum needs of our churches and developed a six year Through The Bible quiz program. She has written two books, Our Heritage and Truths for the Heart.
Three years ago a spirited congregation, led by Pastor John Curtin, decided to step out in faith & grow a church. For many of us this meant leaving behind a way of life that was very comfortable & also leaving behind a church full of family and friends. We would trade in a beautiful brand new sanctuary, gymnasium, classrooms, fellowship hall, etc., for a tiny sanctuary, only two classrooms, questionable heating and air and limited parking. But through this willingness to be bold in our faith we have seen God work to provide. Before we had to worry about whose basement we would have to clean out to hold worship in, God provided a tiny white church which we would call home for 3 years. We were busting at the seams from the very beginning, but with patience and perseverance we waited for God to continue to open doors.

We faced many obstacles but when you step out of the way and allow God to work, He makes what seems impossible possible. We were told we wouldn't be able to receive financing for any kind of building or property for at least 5 years. This news was discouraging but we would not allow satan to deter us from the greater plan which we knew God had for us. One of the many Scripture verses we rely on is Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.". Little did we know how God would use that verse in our immediate future. The new building God placed at our feet to purchase was owned by a church by the name Church 29:11! We celebrated our first Sunday in this building on May 4th which by no coincidence was our third birthday. We held the dedication service for God’s building & His congregation on Sunday, June 22nd.

We were so very blessed to have many from the denomination come and take part. We enjoyed a great time of fellowship followed by amazing God inspired worship. We were encouraged by the support & the words of Pastor Bill Snow, Pastor Keith Merritt & President Benny Tate. We know God has much more in store for the congregation at the Olive Grove and we are eagerly looking forward to serving our community and passing on the blessings God has so abundantly placed at our feet.
As a San Antonio Spurs basketball fan, I have thoroughly enjoyed seeing their style of play succeed this year. It truly is an example of the value of the TEAM. Even if you don't like basketball, or have never played sports, you know the value of many people serving together to reach a common goal. The Spurs’ style of play was recently referred to as “the sum greater than its parts”. It was a testimony to five players on the floor truly playing as one unit.

When I think of our missions program, I think of exactly the same thing! We have 23 missionaries serving in various ways with one goal: To reach people with the gospel, and start new, life-giving churches around the world.

I also think of you. You may not be “on the floor”, but you have allowed our “players” to be there! Without you, there would be no missions program. Your prayers and giving make all the difference.

This year, we expanded our team by appointing five new missionaries to help fulfill our evangelistic vision: Mike and Katie Gerald, church planters to Fort Worth, TX; Wil and Linda Yazzie, Pastors of Two Grey Hills Church on the Navajo Reservation; and Juan Ishim, Pastor of the Santa Theresa Village Church in Belize.

Again, we turn to you, our Most Valuable Players. Will you consider helping us by praying and giving to these new missionaries and their work? Let me encourage you to adopt a missionary and set a goal for their monthly support from your church. Your church will be blessed, and the kingdom of God will keep winning!

Blessings,

Davy Fenton
Director CMC Missions

DAVY FENTON is the Senior Pastor of Mount Vernon CMC and also serves as the Missions Director for the CMC. Davy and his wife Michelle have 3 children.
Great Teams = Great Results
Director Davy Fenton

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This past Easter service for Fountain of Life CMC was especially powerful as they celebrated their Resurrection Service on the new foundation of their new church building. With just the foundation “slab” completed, the church used a tent canopy to cover the worship area and enjoyed a record-setting attendance with one person praying to receive Christ in the service.

This growing fellowship is our first church in the country of Belize, and is located in the town of Orange Walk. After purchasing land two years ago, we are moving forward on the building project, preparing to construct the roof this Summer and Fall. Our field coordinator, Charlie Joe Green, and the pastors of the church, Alberto and Melva Posada are seeing God work in the church to bring new people to the Lord and raise up new young spiritual leaders who are involved in our church planting ministry in nearby-towns. Pray that they continue to see a fruitful harvest. Pray and support this growing ministry!

The Fuentes Family
Returns Home to Mission Mexico

We are excited to announce the newest addition to our Mission Mexico Team, Asael and Hannah Fuentes, along with their three children, Asael II, Natalia, and Sofia. They are also expecting a new baby girl any day now!

For years, the Fuentes family has been a dedicated part of our missions team serving in Alabama, Belize, and the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Now, they are returning to Asael's home area to minister with Mike and Evelyn Gary in Mission Mexico.

This is a wonderful story of ministry coming full-circle. Asael's father, Rev. Fidel Fuentes pastors the very first CM church in Mexico that was planted some 50 years ago! Now, his son is returning to help fulfill the mission of evangelism and church planting that we began as a pioneer work in the 1960’s.

Would you consider supporting the Fuentes with your prayers and taking some new shares in their ministry? A $25 monthly share would go a long way to helping them begin this new ministry! Our prayerful goal is to raise 100 new monthly share supporters for them. Prayerfully consider supporting them!

Fuente De Vida Fountain of Life CMC Celebrates Easter on their New “Foundation”!

This past Easter service for Fountain of Life CMC was especially powerful as they celebrated their Resurrection Service on the new foundation of their new church building. With just the foundation “slab” completed, the church used a tent canopy to cover the worship area and enjoyed a record-setting attendance with one person praying to receive Christ in the service.

This growing fellowship is our first church in the country of Belize, and is located in the town of Orange Walk. After purchasing land two years ago, we are moving forward on the building project, preparing to construct the roof this Summer and Fall. Our field coordinator, Charlie Joe Green, and the pastors of the church, Alberto and Melva Posada are seeing God work in the church to bring new people to the Lord and raise up new young spiritual leaders who are involved in our church planting ministry in nearby-towns. Pray that they continue to see a fruitful harvest. Pray and support this growing ministry!
2014 has been an exciting and busy year for Congregational Methodist Mission Haiti. I have just returned from our third mission trip for this year and have two additional trips planned for August and October 2014. It is amazing to see how God continues to bless us and these children of Haiti, and to see it first hand is such an honor and privilege.

The children of GSP Orphanage continue to grow and thank you for being part of their lives. This special group of children are working hard each day to grow into Christians that are ready to go out into Haiti and change their world. We know that only because of your support, can we continue to make a difference in the lives of these precious children.

We are planning 2015 trips and we would love to take your team to Haiti to share in the lives of these children.

For information on future trips and how you can make a difference in Haiti, contact, CMC Mission Haiti Field Coordinator Don Mapp: 770-468-4481 don@rockspringsonline.com
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We have had great success with children programs, medical clinics, and construction on each of our trips. Over 200 children have participated in VBS programs that produced several salvations. Our medical clinics have provided life changing care for over 500 patients. The construction of their new home is moving forward and we pray that we can finish the building this year.

We are planning 2015 trips and we would love to take your team to Haiti to share in the lives of these children.

For information on future trips and how you can make a difference in Haiti, contact, CMC Mission Haiti Field Coordinator Don Mapp:
770-468-4481
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Dallas-Fort Worth is ripe for the harvest! The metroplex boasts of an abundant population of over 6 million in 2012, and Dallas made the cut for Forbes Magazine’s list of “America’s Fastest-Growing Cities 2014.” With much encouragement and confirmation from the Lord and His people, we are confident that He is leading us to reach out to the multitudes of broken and lost people in Dallas-Fort Worth. God has already begun to guide us on the mission of starting a new fellowship to further build His Kingdom, and we are trusting that He will provide us the resources we need to have a relevant and effective ministry to the people of Dallas-Fort Worth.

We ask that you would consider being a part of this provision, by partnering with us as we continue on this journey! We appreciate the partnerships that have already begun with the Division of Missions Ministries, the President’s office, and the North Texas Conference. Our hope is that with these partners, as well as the support and prayers of individual churches, we will be able to start a strong work in planting a thriving church in Dallas-Fort Worth.

For More Information:
Michael Gerald
plantdallasproject@gmail.com
P.O. Box 9
Florence, MS 39073
It has already been an amazing year at LifePoint Church. God is moving in our midst, and it has never been more evident than on three Sundays in April. We planned an Egg Hunt for the Sunday before Easter. In the past, this Egg Hunt has given a boost in attendance and has served as a great opportunity for people to invite friends that may not normally attend church. That Sunday, we had around 100 kids 5th grade and under! These kids got to experience our service that is designed just for them called KidsPoint. At KidsPoint, they experienced fun music, dancing, games, videos, and a message from the Bible. We had many families show up for the Egg Hunt and return the following Sunday. One of which was Josh and Jennifer, but their story doesn’t stop there.

On Easter, we took a big step of faith and decided to do two services for the first time in our history. We were excited to see what God was going to do, and He did not disappoint! We had 362 people in total that Sunday. It is the highest attendance we have ever seen here! In the second service, 8 people decided to give their life to Christ! It was amazing to see how Christ drew people to Himself that day.

Josh and Jennifer attended the second service on Easter, but when Nathan gave the invitation, they didn’t budge. However, later that night, our pastor, Nathan Sanders, received an email from them. Josh said that he and Jennifer had been talking all afternoon about the message and invitation Nathan gave. He said they both knew that they should have responded in the service, but they didn’t. Now, after thinking and praying together, Josh and Jennifer decided that they wanted to go public with their faith!

The Sunday after Easter, we celebrated baptism. Josh and Jennifer, along with 13 other people ages 6 to 60 went public with their faith that day in front of 323 people (our highest attendance ever in a single service)!

Our church has never been more excited about how we see God working. Every week, we are seeing new people come in, get involved, and give their lives to Jesus. We are so thankful to God for how He is allowing us to be a small part of His Kingdom coming to Cartersville!

Nathan Sanders is the Lead Pastor of LifePoint Church where he has served for 7 years and also serves on the Board of the Division of Church Ministries for the CMC. Nathan and his wife, Shontina have 3 children.
Saturday, April 5th, members of LifePoint Church in Cartersville provided free oil changes to 74 families in their city. LPC has been learning that the position of their hands reflects the condition of their hearts, and they truly want to live their lives open-handed. This event gave the church a chance to minister to real needs in their community.

LifePoint members, together teamed up with Advance Auto Parts and Martin’s Wrecker Service, contributed to the community effort by supplying the oil, filters, and old-fashioned man-power. While awaiting the free service to be performed, friends relaxed together and enjoyed the fellowship, games, homemade snacks, and kids’ activities provided.

It was an amazing opportunity to reach out and meet a real need in their community. Here is an email they received the next week from a lady named April:

“My husband and I would like to say thank you for the free oil change. We really needed it. We are on the right track of changing our lives, and we would like to ask everyone to pray for us. We had an addiction to meth and we are now overcoming it with the help of Jesus Christ. We are now on the right road to recovery! Thank you very much.”

Through the Oil Change event, LifePoint got to play a small part on April’s journey towards becoming not only clean and sober but also becoming a passionate follower of Jesus. There is no telling how God will use the actions of these 50 volunteers to continue to draw lost people to Himself! LPC is just so thankful to be a part of what God is doing in Cartersville, GA.

Nathan Sanders is the Lead Pastor of LifePoint Church where he has served for 7 years and also serves on the Board of the Division of Church Ministries for the CMC. Nathan and his wife, Shontina, have 3 children.
As a pastor, I must confess, I did little personal evangelism. I loathe confrontations and putting people on the spot. But the iPlan changed my attitude toward personal evangelism. I learned this plan from my good friend Lanny Peek who pastored the Daniel’s Chapel Church in Naples, Texas. I don’t think he ever penned his plan, but everyone who knew him saw it in action. I used to refer to it as the “Peek Principles of Successful Evangelism.” Now I just call it the “iPlan.”

The “iPlan” has five principles that I saw demonstrated by Lanny. The first “i” is for the individual. We may hope to reach people with church activities and programs, but ultimately it is the individual that is the difference-maker. Lanny knew the importance of individual effort in ministry. He once told me, “If I want to see more people saved, then I must pray more and go more.”

The second “i” is intercessory prayer. He prayed early and often. He interceded for the hurting and those God would bring across his path.

The third “i” is intentionality. He had a plan. He had figured out where the people were, and he went to them. We must develop a specific plan that fits us and our area. If we fail to plan our evangelism, then we plan to fail at evangelism.

The fourth “i” is for invest. Lanny invested time and resources into those God put in his path. Those that knew Lanny knew that he loved and valued them. I like to say that Lanny just loved people to Christ and the church.

The final “i” is for invite. Lanny would lovingly begin to invite these people to church and Christ. Before the Lord took Lanny home a few years ago, Daniels Chapel was the fastest growing church in the North Texas Annual Conference.

Having learned from Lanny, I daily ask God to set up Divine Appointments for me. I have specific places I go and look for those God might put in my path. One day I met Billy Jones when I stopped by his garage sale. (These yard sales are great opportunities to
find a few bargains and maybe see some lives changed.) I struck up a conversation with him and felt that he might be someone God had put in my path. I started regularly driving by his house hoping to catch Him outside. One day he was working in his yard, so I stopped by to be neighborly and hopefully begin a friendship. We talked probably 30 minutes. Over the following months. I stopped by often and learned of his job loss, divorce and other battles he was facing. At this time he was resistant to my invitations to visit our church, so I continued investing in him. One day I dropped off a pound cake; on another day I took him out for lunch. Recently, I took him out to our building site and showed him around our building under construction. When I dropped him off at his house, I asked if he would consider doing me a personal favor. He said he would try. I told him it would mean a lot to me if he would visit our church when we got into the new building. He smiled and assured me he would be glad to visit us when we got into our new building. I’ve been continuing to intercede for him and invest in him.

The iPlan is simple. It begins with us as individuals deciding to join God in His work and them developing a simple intentional plan that works for us. Our plan must include much intercessory prayer. Only God can draw people to Himself and direct us. As we pray, we must go to where people are and look for those Divine Appointments. As we invest in their lives with our time and resources, we can begin inviting them to church and to a personal relationship with Christ. Most people still say it is because someone they knew invited them that they came to church and eventually to Christ.

Ken Griffis is the Co-Pastor of Keystone Church and also serves on the Board of the Division of Church Ministries for the CMC. Ken and his wife Ginger have 3 children.
It’s never a good feeling to watch much of your life burn before your eyes. Early on a Monday morning, December 17th, 2012, that’s exactly where I found myself. I, along with several members of Eastridge Park were standing in the church parking lot watching our beloved sanctuary, fully involved in flame, burn to the ground. There was absolutely nothing the firemen on the scene could do but contain the flames keeping the surrounding neighborhood safe.

As huge pillars of black smoke rose like an angry tower into the morning air, there are a lot of things that go through your mind. As you try to find God in all the chaos, questions emerge. What are we going to do now? Is this God’s hand? Is He judging us? Is this it for Eastridge Park Church? It doesn’t help matters when the Fire investigator appears from the smoking rubble to inform you that the fire began under the pulpit! (The cause of the fire was actually a faulty power strip that ran under the pulpit...so it wasn't actually my preaching) Not very
encouraging for the Pastor!

Those of us present circled up and did only what we know to do when life gets crazy, we prayed. We poured our hearts out to the Lord. We wept and sought the Lords direction and peace. When the prayer ended, one thing was certain. The Lord was not done with Eastridge Park. Peace returned and determination began to rise in us as we sought direction from the Lord. That evening, alone with my thoughts, I walked through the burned out sanctuary trying to make sense of it all when I found something very surprising.

There was a hymn book, almost completely untouched by the flames open on a barely recognizable piano bench. The Hymn book was open to a hymn which completely took my breath away. The title was “Only Believe” with the opening line, “Only Believe! Only Believe! All things are possible if you only believe!” I knew at that point that the Lord was indeed at work.

We got through Christmas in shock, cramming everyone in our fellowship hall for worship, and seeking the Lord. We had our first official “fire” meeting in January and found that we had a great amount of opportunity before us. Do we rebuild? Do we sell the land and relocate? Do we build a new building on the back lot? Do we find a Church for sale and move into it? One thing was for certain, we had no clear direction. The result of that meeting was to begin a concerted effort to pray for the Lords direction. We began to walk around the grounds and pray before and after worship each Sunday. We prayed on Monday mornings early before the week began. We prayed when we fellowshipped together during the week. We soon learned that the Lord wanted us to rebuild right where we were. We began the bidding process and several months later we retained an outstanding contractor filled with Christian people that was quite excited about our project.

Construction began and week by week we watched as our new, redesigned Sanctuary began to take form before our eyes. Finally in March of 2014, we were handed the keys and entered our new completely redesigned, completely paid off Sanctuary!

As I look back over that insane journey, I am amazed at the Lord’s presence every step of the way. As we look to scripture, we see that fire is used in many different ways. It was used to guide the Children of Israel through the dark nights as they wandered in the wilderness. It was used to consume sacrifices on an altar when Isaiah took on over 400 prophets of Baal. We also find the refiner's fire used to burn the dross off of metal to purify it. Something like fire descended on the disciples as they
gathered in the upper room at Pentecost. And of course there is the final fire of judgment.

However, my favorite, and probably the one that really seems to apply to our situation the past two years is the fire we find facing three scared but faithful men named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men were faced with being thrown in the fire to be burned to death simply for refusing to bow down and taking a stand for their beloved Lord God. Their conduct in such dire circumstances encouraged us. They chose to trust in their Lord who was able to deliver them, and they refused to bow down to the circumstances around them. They had to go through the fire. But, it was in the fire that they encountered the greatest miracle of all, the comforting, protecting presence of a loving God.

Our fire caused us all to reflect. Not only on our church and the direction we were going, but on ourselves as well. It most definitely refined us, and through it all we encountered the presence of Christ unlike at any other time in our church’s life. Our building went up literally without one hitch (almost unheard of if you’ve ever experienced anything in construction) and we came out debt free. Our building is different and greater than before. We can serve more people! Our people are closer and our purpose in our community more defined. Our mission is to Seek the lost. Nurture the found. Empower the people for Christ Jesus. We are going to be about making disciples wherever and however we are able. We are going to teach them and baptize them in the great and awesome name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Since the first of the year we have hired three staff members and are interviewing a possible youth pastor. We have had 23 people join our fellowship. Two have truly given their lives to the Lord Jesus. We have started a vibrant home group ministry. And the work still continues!

We continue to iron out wrinkles of moving into our new building, but we have come a long way. We are still in need of furniture, but the North Texas Annual Conference blessed us greatly with new chairs for our sanctuary. The outpouring of community and denominational support has been amazing and humbling! Our official dedication service was July 20th surrounded by an entire weekend of events. Please hold us up in prayer as we are still here, humbly serving beside you until our Lords imminent return!

Mark Mills is the Senior Pastor of Eastridge Park CM Church and also serves as the Chairman of the Board for the Division of Mission Ministries for the CMC. Mark and his wife Lori have 3 children.
Congregational Methodist Church gathered in the upper room at Pentecost. And of course there is the final fire of judgment. However, my favorite, and probably the one that really seems to apply to our situation the past two years is the fire we find facing three scared but faithful men named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men were faced with being thrown in the fire to be burned to death simply for refusing to bow down and taking a stand for their beloved Lord God. Their conduct in such dire circumstances encouraged us. They chose to trust in their Lord who was able to deliver them, and they refused to bow down to the circumstances around them. They had to go through the fire. But, it was in the fire that they encountered the greatest miracle of all, the comforting, protecting presence of a loving God.

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Rock Springs Church loves America! There is no better way to celebrate our great Nation than with a “Celebrate America Picnic!”

On Sunday, June 29th Rock Springs Church hosted its Annual Independence Day Celebration Picnic. The campus was filled with more than 20,000 guests from many surrounding communities and even neighboring states who enjoyed music from accomplished musical artists, Mac Powell and Diamond Rio. The crowd was excited to celebrate American patriotism with Duck Dynasty’s own, Uncle Si Robertson! Uncle Si even surprised the guests by singing a few musical tunes himself.

There were all kinds of activities, games, trucks and inflatables for the kids. Local food vendors
Congregational Methodist Church provided yummy treats to beat the southern summer heat. The evening was concluded with an amazing fireworks extravaganza that lit up the night sky. And as always, there was no admission charge for this annual community event.

Ranew’s Companies. They also would like to thank their Silver and Bronze Sponsors.

Rock Springs Church wishes to thank their generous sponsors who helped make this event possible. The Corporate Sponsors include Jones Petroleum and Marathon Oil. Gold Sponsors include Ag-Pro, LRC Towing, Milner Farms, Chris Daniel CPA, K&K Manufacturing, Stephen Durham DDS, Southern Scapes, Sherrell-Westbury Funeral Home, Buckner’s Family Restaurant, Commercial Glass, & Mirror, Moe’s of Macon, Diversified Electronics, McLeRoy Inc., Collins Trucking, Milam’s Tree Service, Boaty’s Transport, Chappell Mill Trees, Representative David Knight, Ohio Christian University and

All proceeds from the picnic go to benefit Rock Springs Medical Clinic. This free clinic provides a comprehensive range of services for individuals without insurance or the means to afford such care. The Rock Springs Clinic is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit community faith-based health clinic staffed with a team of professional medical and clerical volunteers. The clinic offers free Medical treatment, basic counseling, pharmaceutical and wellness services provided with compassion and respect. For more information on RSC Health Partners, please visit their website at www.rsclinic.org or 678-688-1950.

Rock Springs Church is located at 219 Rock Springs Rd in northern Lamar County about 10 miles from Griffin, Barnesville and Jackson. For more information about Rock Springs and its many ministries, visit their website www.rockspringsgonline.com.
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CM Church Gets Nationwide Exposure!

A regular Sunday evening service at Bethlehem Community Church wouldn’t be cause for the Jones County Sheriff’s Department to be on duty. But when word gets out that the speaker could be a former president, people become interested. Very Interested!!!

The church had been promoting a very special guest was coming, but never revealed the name. One thing led to another, and the community began to believe former president George W. Bush was coming to town. When they showed up, the church’s entrance was lined with American flags, men who appeared to be in the Secret Service were guarding the building, and hundreds of people packed the sanctuary, even out into the foyer and front entrance. Every newspaper, radio station, and even the local television stations were on site capturing this intriguing story.

Pastor Altman says, “It was unbelievable, we used every chair from all of our facilities and it still wasn’t enough.”

That little clue was a sign that was only visible to people on the first few rows. It looks like the president’s seal other than one word-impersonator. But that didn’t stop the cheering or the pictures or the iPhone recordings of...
what hundreds of people expected to be “Number 43.”

“I really enjoyed it,” said Theresa Breland. “Even though it’s wasn’t him, we had a good time, and we’ll be back.”

The night was a record setting event for Bethlehem Community Church with over 650 people in attendance. Pastor Altman said, “That was just the ones we could count, there were people everywhere! I’m sure we had many not stay, because we just didn’t have anymore room.”

Mr. Morgan said after the event, “this church maxed out their potential, I value the leadership of their pastor.”

The excitement didn’t end that night. Bethlehem Community Church was featured on the front page of, just about, every newspaper within driving distance in the days to come. The church’s event even made national news receiving highlights from CNN, the BLAZE, FOX, and NANCY GRACE.

Pastor Altman summed up the event with these words,

“I truly believe that the greatest news known to mankind is the Good News of Jesus Christ! I am passionate about anything that can be used to draw people to come and listen to the Good News. And that’s exactly what we did tonight. There were hundreds of people in church tonight that normally would have been somewhere else and that was our goal!”

One newspaper concluded, “Bethlehem Community Church is located in the north part of Laurel in the rural Sharon Community. It’s a beautiful church with some exciting things going on, but it’s out there. As a result of this event, one thing is for sure; A lot more people in Jones County know who and where Bethlehem Community Church is.”

Jamie Altman is the Senior Pastor of Bethlehem Community Church where he has served for over 3 years and also serves as the Secretary on the Board of the Division of Church Ministries for the CMC. Jamie and his wife, Brandi have 3 daughters.
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Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.

- 1 Timothy 5:17

October is Pastor Appreciation Month

We Honor Your Service 2014

Make Plans to Honor Your Pastor This Year!

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www.my-pastor.com/pastor-appreciation